Albatross gives you more…

• Gain a deeper insight into the life of the diggers from our specialist Battlefield Tour Manager
• Enjoy charming Bruges and the medieval Amiens Cathedral
• Visit the Flanders Commemorative sites including Messines, Hill 60, Polygon Wood, Essex Farm Cemetery, Tyne Cot, Toronto Avenue Cemetery, Island of Ireland Peace Park and explore Hooge Crater Cemetery and Passchendaele Memorial Museum
• Visit the Somme Commemorative sites including the Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux, Fromelles Memorials & Museum, Vimy Ridge, Bullecourt ‘Digger’ Memorial, the Jean et Denise Letaille Museum in Bullecourt, Adelaide Cemetery, Australian Memorials at Pozières, and the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme
• Be moved by the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate and visit ‘In Flanders Fields’ Museum
• Visit Franco-Australian Museum at Victoria Primary School in Villers-Bretonneux and Historial de la Grande Guerre (Museum of the Great War) in Peronne
• 13 years experience operating Western Front tours

The Albatross Difference

To ensure you get the most memorable and fulfilling commemorative touring experience, all departures of this Albatross Western Front tour are led by highly experienced Tour Managers who are specialist Battlefield Guides, many of who are members of the Guild of Battlefield Guides.

DAY 1 PARIS
Your tour commences in your Paris hotel this evening with a welcome drink and dinner. This is an ideal chance to meet and get to know your Tour Manager and fellow travellers. (D)

Your Paris hotel: Mercure Paris Montmartre

DAY 2 YPRES
We travel to Ypres where we stay the next three nights. This afternoon enjoy a walking tour through the centre of town and see the magnificent Cloth Hall, St Georges Chapel, Ypres Ramparts Cemetery and the Menin Gate Memorial, the British Empire’s tribute to the missing from the battles around Ypres. Highlight of your day will be a visit to ‘In Flanders Fields’ Museum - a remarkable interactive experience of World War 1, located in the Cloth Hall. Between 1916 and 1918 thousands of Australian and New Zealand soldiers came to Ypres where some of the heaviest fighting in World War 1 took place. Completely destroyed in the war, the town was lovingly re-built carefully restoring the grand old buildings and picturesque square. Our hotel is superbly located in the very centre of the old town and barely 200 metres from the famous Menin Gate. Tonight, after a buffet dinner, you can attend the sounding of the Last Post at the Menin Gate, a moving ceremony repeated every night since 1928. (B, D)

Your Ypres hotel: Novotel Ieper Centrum

DAY 3 YPRES
A fascinating day focusing on the ‘Flanders Offensive’ of June to November 1917. In the morning we visit the site of the Battle of Messines, the beautiful Toronto Avenue Cemetery and the Island of Ireland Peace Park. This afternoon we follow the famous Menin Road to visit Hooge Crater Cemetery, Hill 60, the 5th Australian Division Memorial in Polygon Wood, the
Passchendaele Memorial Museum and the British Commonwealth's largest war cemetery at Tyne Cot. What happened in this area east of Ypres in 1917 was eventually summed up in one terrible word – Passchendaele! (B)

**DAY 4  YPRES**

We have included a delightful excursion today to the charming city of Bruges. Recognised as one of Europe's best preserved medieval cities, Bruges is riddled with canals, bridges and quiet back streets. Take time to wander the quaint and picturesque cobbled streets and relax in one of the pavement cafes on the glorious old market square. Later we will stop to visit the Essex Farm Cemetery, a site forever associated with the composition of the poem ‘In Flanders Field’. (B)

**DAY 5  AMIENS**

Today we journey through the old Western Front battlefields from Ypres in Belgium to Amiens in France. After crossing the border, we will stop at VC Corner (Australian Cemetery), Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Military Cemetery and the Australian Memorial Park at Fromelles, scene of Australia's first major battle on the Western Front. We also visit the new Fromelles museum. From there we visit the most spectacular British Commonwealth memorial in France – the Canadian National Memorial on Vimy Ridge. Before heading into Amiens, we will travel across the old Bullecourt battlefield and view the moving statue of an Australian soldier at the Bullecourt 'Digger' Memorial and visit the Jean et Denise Letaille Museum* in Bullecourt. You will be staying the next three nights in the centre of Amiens within easy walking distance to the picturesque city canals and the Notre-Dame – Amiens' masterpiece 13th century gothic cathedral. A packed lunch, and dinner at your hotel, has been included today. (B, L, D)

*Museum closed 1 May so unable to be visited on 27 April departure

Your Amiens hotel: Mercure Amiens Cathedrale

**DAY 6  AMIENS**

Today we experience the tragedy of the 1916 Somme Battlefields. We visit the Australian memorials at Pozieres where over 23,000 Australians were injured with 8,000 losing their lives. The memorial at the windmill simply reads, "This spot was the centre of the struggle in this area and was captured by Australian troops who fell more thickly on this ridge than on any other". Later we visit the vast and tragic Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, the Ulster Tower Memorial to the 36th Ulster Division and the Newfoundland Memorial Park. A snack lunch is included today. Returning to Amiens your evening is free. (B, L)

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“*In March 1916, the infantry divisions of the AIF went to the Western Front in France and Belgium to fight in the trenches against the Germans. Those years between 1916 and 1918, saw the most costly conflict in which Australia has ever been involved.*

Of the 102,800 names on the national Roll of Honour at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, over 45,000 died as a result of the fighting along the Western Front.

For years after the war, place names such as Fromelles, Pozieres, Bullecourt, Ypres, Villers-Bretonneux and Mont St Quentin, where so many Australians perished, were household words in Australia. By 1918, Australians were fighting in their own army corps – the Australian Corps. From May of that year the corps was commanded by an Australian – General Sir John Monash."

Dr Richard Reid – Albatross War Historian – Western Front

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**DAY 7  AMIENS**

Begin your day with a visit to one of the gems of French medieval architecture - Amiens Cathedral, where the Australian and New Zealand soldiers have been honoured. Today we explore the 1918 Somme Battlefields including the Adelaide Cemetery (site of the exhumation of Australia’s Unknown Soldier in November 1993) and the Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux. We have included a visit to the fascinating Franco-Australian Museum at the Victoria Primary School in the village of Villers-Bretonneux. Later we visit the Australian Corps Memorial at Le Hamel and the 2nd Australian Division Memorial at Mont St Quentin. Lunch time is at leisure in the historical town of Péronne, where we have also included entrance to the Historial de la Grande Guerre (Museum of the Great War). Your farewell dinner tonight is in a local restaurant. (B, D)

**DAY 8  TO PARIS**

Sadly your Western Front tour ends this morning after breakfast as you are transferred to Paris to arrive around midday. Drop off points will be Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport and Paris Gare du Nord station. We recommend that you do not book flights or trains that depart Paris before 2pm today. (B)
The Complete ANZAC Experience – 14 days

Why not complete the ANZAC story by combining our Gallipoli and Western Front tours?

All departures of this 8 day ‘All Quiet on the Western Front’ tour departing between May and September have been specially timed to commence immediately following the end of our fascinating ‘The Spirit of Gallipoli’ tours.

By easily combining these two intriguing tours you have a unique opportunity to create a memorable 14 day ‘The Complete ANZAC Experience’, taking you from the waters edge at ANZAC Cove, up the barren Gallipoli escarpments to the Nek and Lone Pine, and then across the haunting landscape and emotive sites of Flanders and the ‘bloody Somme’. As an added bonus, by combining these two tours we will offer you a frequent traveller discount of $200 per person off the price of the second tour.

(Note: to connect these two tours you need to fly from Istanbul to Paris. Flight arrangements NOT included)

Tour Inclusions

• All excursions, scenic drives and sightseeing as described in the itinerary
• Fully escorted by our highly experienced Tour Manager/specialist Battlefield Guide
• Personal audio system whilst on tour
• First class air-conditioned touring coach
• End of tour tips to Tour Manager, driver and local Paris guide
• 7 nights accommodation as described
• Buffet breakfast daily, 2 lunch packs
• 4 dinners including farewell dinner in Amiens
• Welcome drink Paris
• All entrances as per itinerary
• Extensive touring of the WW1 Battlefields

2014 Dates and Prices

8 days only $2,589 pp twin share
Single supplement $629 (land only prices in Australian dollars)

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'I came on this tour seeking a better understanding and appreciation of the sacrifices made by the brave Aussies on the Western Front. This was an unforgettable journey which has taken me from the numerous words and pages I have read over the years, to a visual real life experience that will remain with me forever. An amazingly knowledgeable guide, a co-operative tour leader and a great driver!' Rodney